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### **Atascadero State Hospital Gets New Executive Director**

*State Mental Health Director appoints career manager to head state's only all-male forensic hospital.*

**Atascadero**—State Mental Health Director Stephen W. Mayberg, Ph.D., today announced the appointment of Melvin E. Hunter, JD, MPA, as Executive Director of Atascadero State Hospital (ASH).

Mr. Hunter began his career at Atascadero in 1972 as a Psychiatric Technician Trainee, and has since held both clinical and management positions including Assistant Hospital Administrator, Coordinator of Forensic Services, Hospital Administrative Resident, General Services Administrator, and Health and Safety Officer. Prior to assuming the role of Assistant Hospital Administrator in November 2000, Hunter served two years at the Department of Mental Health Long Term Care Services Division, with primary responsibility for leading the successful siting process for the new state hospital that will be built in Coalinga.

“Mr. Hunter’s career path has prepared him well for the responsibilities of managing Atascadero State Hospital. We are confident that under his leadership the hospital will continue to provide the highest caliber of services and to maintain the high standards and reputation that have made ASH a recognized leader in forensic psychiatric hospitals in the U.S.,” said Dr. Mayberg.

Hunter will oversee a staff of more than 1900 employees who provide clinical, administrative and support services for the daily activities of the hospital, and treatment of more than 1,000 patients who reside at the hospital.

Completed in 1954, Atascadero State Hospital is one of four hospitals in the State's mental health system, and the only all-male forensic facility in the state. Located on 700 acres in the Central Coast region, the hospital provides mental health services to individuals who are civilly and judicially committed patients referred by the courts and Department of Corrections.

The hospital is accredited by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations and is licensed by the Department of Health Services.